

THE GOOD WOLF



FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT



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BY

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CHAPTER ONE

THE GOOD WOLF



HERE was once a fat little, nice little, round little boy and his name was Tim. As soon as people looked at him they began to laugh and he began to laugh too. He had dimples on his knees and dimples on his hands and dimples all round his mouth. That was because Fairies liked him and used to kiss him whenever they flew past him, and they kissed him so much that they made dim-





ples. He had a lot of curly hair which made a lovely mop. In fact he was lovesome all over and no one ever denied it. But when he played about—and he never stopped playing—the wind blew his curly mop into tangles, and when he stood on his head on his bed or the grass or the nursery floor, that rubbed it into tangles; and when he was asleep and cuddled down into his pillows and dreamed delightful things, that ruffled it into tangles.

So after he was dressed in the morning his mamma was obliged to brush them all out and comb out all the knots and make





him look soft and fluffy and lovesome for the rest of the day. Now of course this might have been very horrid for both of them. He might have wriggled and cried and she might have pulled hard and scolded. But nothing of the sort happened because they were both nice people. He was a nice people and she was a nice people. So she used to sit down on a chair by a window which looked right into a big maple tree where birds lived, and Tim used to turn his back and stand leaning his fat little warm body against her knee and then she would comb



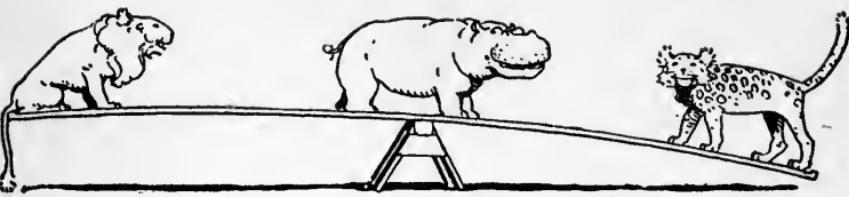


and brush, and while she did she told him the Hair Curling Stories. This was one of them and it was called:

THE GOOD WOLF.

Once there was another little boy and his name was Bartholomew Herbert Hubert Ellecompane but of course he was not called all that at once. When people wanted him they only said Barty and he was quite satisfied, because you see that if every time anyone wanted to make you a present of a beautiful train or a box of caramels, he had to call out "Bartholo-

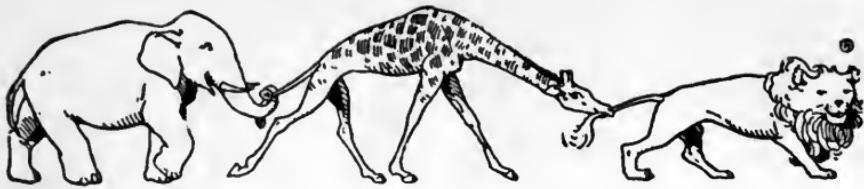




new Herbert Hubert Ellecompane" before he could give them to you, a great deal of time would be wasted.

Well, Barty was a nice people. If he had not been you would probably have heard crying and seen wriggling in his nursery every morning. He lived in the time when boys wore quite long, curly hair and if your hair is short you don't know how much combing and brushing that takes. But Barty was so cheerful that he did not mind it one bit and even used to laugh and chuckle and sing songs when his hair was being brushed. (When





the story of the Good Wolf was being told to Tim his mother used to feel his fat little body shake against her knee when he heard this part because he always laughed and chuckled at it.)

Indeed Barty was a great blessing and a privilege. He lived on the edge of a deep forest, and he was very fond of that forest because there were such wonderful things in it—things that grew and things that built nests and things that burrowed under the earth and made long passages and little warm caves to live in—delightful things. Besides which Barty had heard



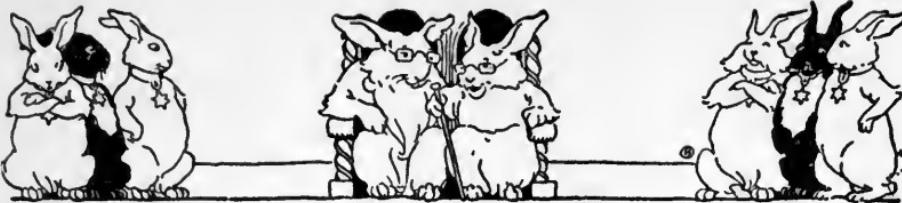


that there were Fairies there, though he had never seen one.

He was not a rich little boy, in fact he was quite poor. He had no toys at all because his father and mother had no money. When he went to bed he used to lie and think of all the things he would like to have, and when he went to sleep he sometimes dreamed he had them, which was very nice, but when he awoke they were not there.

One morning in the winter he wished very much for a sled because when he looked out of the window all the ground

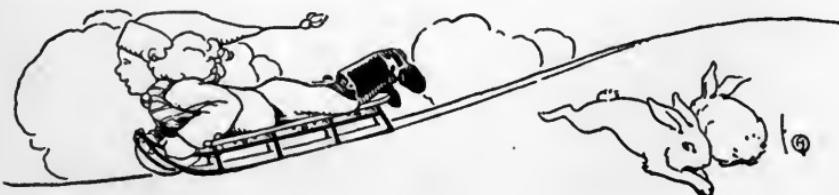


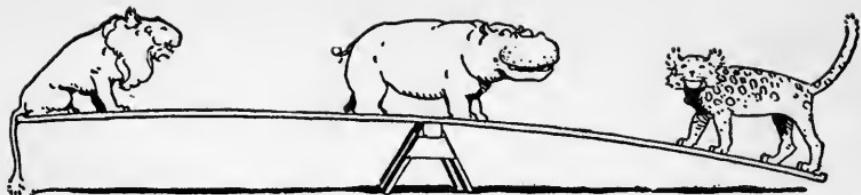


was covered with sparkling snow and all the trees in the forest were loaded with it, and the sun was shining on glittering icicles hanging from the roof.

"I want a sled," he whispered to himself as he pressed his little nose against the glass. "I want one—I wish I had one."

If he had not been a blessing and a privilege he would have cried; but he actually didn't. He scrambled down and asked his mother to put on his thick scarlet cap and coat and his rubber boots, and he went striding out into the snow like a stout little robin red breast.





He stamped across the road and stamped across the field to the edge of his beloved deep forest, because he wanted to see what things were doing—the things that build nests and the things that burrow and make little warm caves to live in.

And when he reached the very edge where the thick trees began—there he saw sitting up on its haunches and looking straight at him an Immense Wolf.

He gave a little jump and turned pale and was going to run away as fast as his rubber boots would carry him, when he suddenly stopped because he could not





help it. The Wolf was speaking to him.

“Do not be frightened,” he said in a slow deep voice. “And do not run away. I am a Good Wolf.”

Usually wolves don’t talk, but this one did, and there were such peculiar things about him that Barty actually forgot to be frightened.

“How—how good are you?” he asked.

“I am this good,” the Wolf said quite solemnly. “When I see a little boy who is a blessing and a privilege and never frets and says he has nothing to play with, and





never wriggles when his hair is brushed, I am his Best and most Intimate Friend. But—" and his nice voice became quite fierce and growly and he showed all his white teeth, "when I meet a boy who is a little pig and a torment and who makes life a burden when the tangles are taken out—I tear him from limb to limb!"

"I am glad I don't make life a burden," Barty said.

"So am I," answered the Good Wolf, "I prefer to be your Intimate Friend. Look at my ears."

He need not have said that, because

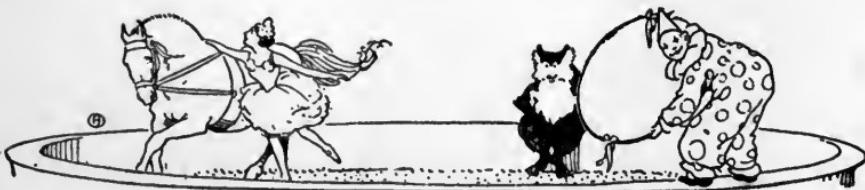




Barty had been looking at them all the time. He had thought them very queer at first because they were so very big and tall and pointed, and one was pink and one was blue. But they had been growing queerer and queerer every minute because they had been growing bigger and bigger and bigger—right before Barty's eyes.

“Watch them,” said the Good Wolf.

He shook the pink ear. Once he shook it—twice he shook it—three times he shook it. And out of it fell a beautiful red sled—exactly the kind Barty had dreamed about.





“That is for you,” the Good Wolf said.
“It is a present from your Intimate Friend.”

“Oh! Oh! Oh! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!” shouted Barty and he danced and danced about.

“Look again,” the Good Wolf said.

He shook the blue ear. Once he shook it—twice he shook it—three times he shook it. And he shook out a splendid train with ever so many cars, and a key to wind it up and make it go—exactly the kind Barty had dreamed about.



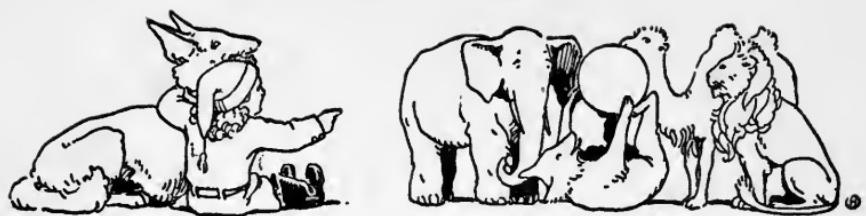


Barty jumped at it and knelt down in the snow.

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” he kept saying because he could scarcely believe he was awake.

Then the Good Wolf shook the pink ear and pennies flew out—pennies and pennies and pennies—just like a shower of rain; and while Barty was scrambling about shouting for joy and picking them up, the blue ear was shaken and a purse flew out, so that there was a place to put the pennies in, and Barty picked up enough to stuff it full to the brim.





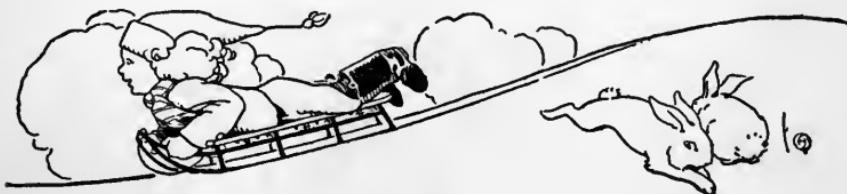
He just danced up and down.
“What a Good Wolf you are!” he said.
“I did not know any wolf could be as
good as this.”

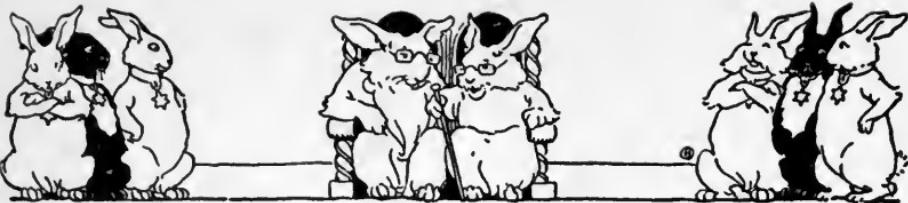
“Ah!” said the Good Wolf. “You
don’t know me!”

(When Tim’s mother came to this part
of the story he used to jump up and down
and laugh for joy until his face was full of
dimples.)

The Good Wolf was enjoying himself as
much as Barty was. He was smiling and
smiling and wagging his tail.

“Now,” he said, “do you want to go





into the forest and see the things that build nests and the things that burrow under the ground and make little warm caves to live in?"

"Please yes!" Barty shouted. "Please yes!"

Then the Good Wolf shook the pink ear. Once he shook it—twice he shook it—three times he shook it—and there flew out a beautiful set of harness made of red leather studded with gold ornaments and hung with tiny sleigh bells.

That made Barty stare because he did not know what it was for.





"It is for me," the Good Wolf said. "You must harness me to your sled and I will draw you anywhere in the world—just anywhere."

Barty clapped his hands and jumped up and down more than ever. He had always wanted to be a coachman and once he dreamed that he had a cart and horse.

"But before you harness me," the Good Wolf said, "there is something else to be done. If your mother were to see a wolf galloping off into the forest with her boy she would not know he was a Good Wolf and she would be frightened; and if we





met a hunter in the forest he would not know I was a good wolf and he would shoot me. So I must change myself into something else."

"Can you?" cried Barty, and his eyes grew as big as saucers, he was so delighted.

"Just you watch me!" said the Good Wolf.

Once he shook himself—twice he shook himself—three times he shook himself—and then something very funny happened. While he was shaking himself he shook so fast that he looked as if he were standing in a white mist. Then he stopped quite





suddenly and stood still. And actually instead of being a wolf he had changed into a great big dog—the kind of big dog that drags sleds over the snow for the Esquimau people—but he was as white as the snow was.

He was so fury and handsome that Barty ran to him and hung round his neck hugging him. He had so wanted a dog and this was exactly the kind he had dreamed about.

“Put on my harness. Put it on!” said the Good Wolf. “I will show you how.”

He showed him how to do it all, and

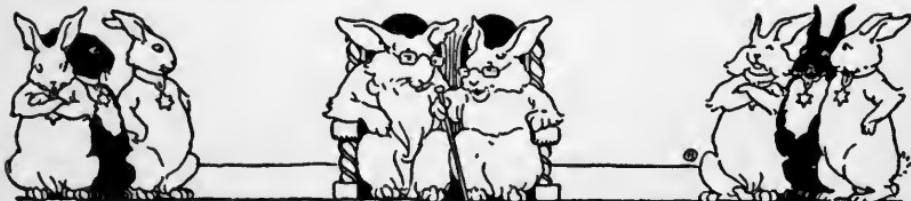


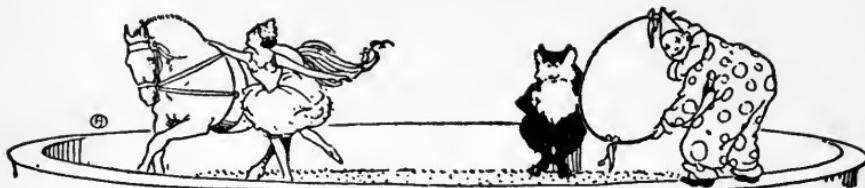


when he was harnessed to the sled, and stood ready with the scarlet leather straps and gold buckles and jingling gold bells shining out against his thick furry white coat, he looked like a picture—so did the sled—so did Barty in his red coat and cap, dancing up and down with his whip in his hand.

“Take the reins and jump on,” said the Wolf.

And Barty did take the reins and jump on, and the Good Wolf began to trot, and the scarlet harness shone, and the bells jingled and jingled, and off they went gliding



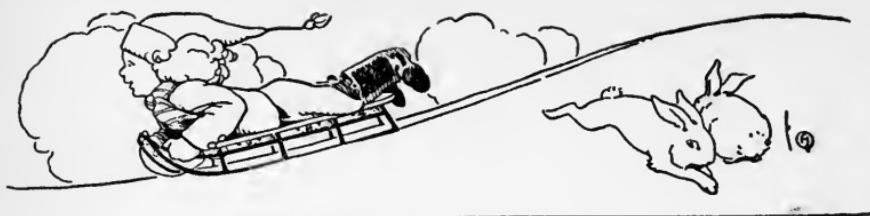


over the sparkling snow into the forest—the deep, deep forest where things built nests, and things burrowed under the earth and made long passages and little warm caves to live in.





CHAPTER TWO



CHAPTER TWO



If you never drove over the sparkling snow in a red sled drawn by a big, furry, white dog (who is really a Good Wolf in disguise) you don't know how delightful it was to Barty and how he laughed with joy to hear the gold bells jingle, jingle, jingling on the harness. When they trotted and jingled and slid into the forest the ground was covered





with a thick white carpet over which the sled went flying. The branches of the trees were piled with white softness and the tiny pines and cedars, which were only just big enough to stick their heads above the deep snow, wore crowns and garlands and icicle diamonds. And everything seemed so still—so still that you could hear a whisper a mile off.

“Where are the things that build nests and the things that burrow under the earth?” asked Barty.

“They are keeping out of the way. They are very careful when the snow is on



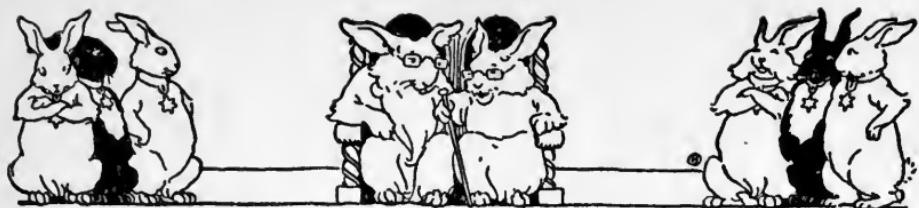


the ground. You see it is so white that when they come out to hop or run about on it, men with guns and dogs can see them and that is very dangerous. But I am going to take you to a place where you will see plenty of them. You are going to see a Snow Feast. I am taking you now."

"What is a Snow Feast?" Party asked, getting quite red with pleasure. "It does sound exciting." (He meant to say exciting.)

"It is exciting," answered the Good Wolf. "No little boy in the world has ever seen it."



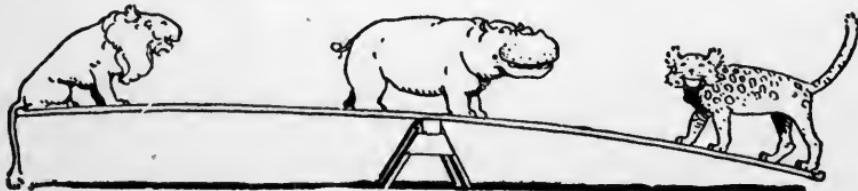


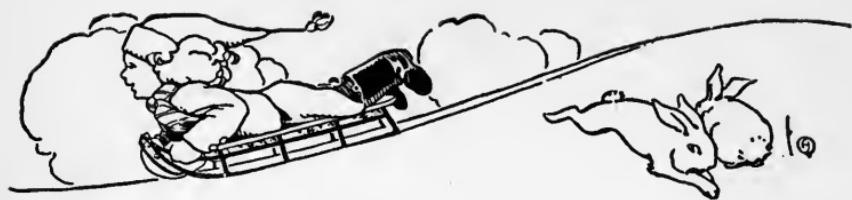
"Has any big boy seen it?" asked Barty.

"No. Not one person in all the world has seen it. It is the greatest secret there ever was. If I were not a Good Wolf I could not see it. Only the very nicest people are allowed. It's the way you behave when knots are combed out of your hair, that lets you in."

Barty was so joyful that he wriggled on his sled and the bells on the reins jingled and jingled.

"I think I'll trot rather faster," the Good Wolf said.





"Would you mind trotting as fast as ever you can?" said Barty.

"I'll trot very fast," the Good Wolf answered. "I'm excited myself."

So he trotted faster and faster and faster and faster, and the sled whizzed over the snow and wound in and about between the tree trunks like lightning, but it never struck against anything, or upset or even joggled. It was simply wonderful. And the forest was wonderful. It was so much bigger than Barty had ever dreamed of its being. They went on and on and on and on, past strange





trees, and strange dells, and strange caves, and the glittering snow was piled everywhere, and the sky grew bluer and bluer, and the sun shone brighter and brighter.

“It must be a Fairy Wood!” cried out Barty as they went flying along.

At that very minute they stopped. They were in a big circle with trees growing thick and tall all round it. The snow looked as if there were a great many tiny hillocks under its whiteness.

“I believe this is a rabbit warren,” Barty said. “That is why the snow looks lumpy.”



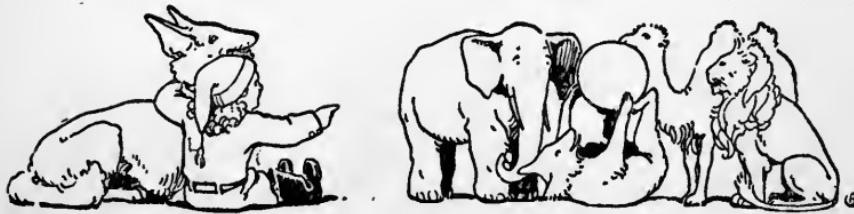


“You wanted to see what the things that burrow under the earth are doing and I am going to show you,” answered the Good Wolf. “Get off the sled and take my harness off.”

“But rabbits are afraid of dogs,” said Barty.

“They are not afraid of me,” said the Good Wolf. “If I did not go to their Snow Feast, they would be perfectly miserable. I’m always invited. Take my harness off.” Barty took it off very politely.

“Now put it on the sled and come along,” the Good Wolf ordered.





“But rabbits are afraid of boys,” said Barty.

“They are not afraid of boys who are a blessing and a privilege. Come on.”

They went to the largest hillock and stood by it. There was a hole in it, and Barty saw that it was an opening into a burrow.

“Is that the way in to the Snow Feast?” he asked. “We are too big to get in there.”

“Watch me,” said the Good Wolf.

Once he shook himself, twice he shook





himself, three times he shook himself, and each time he did it he got smaller and smaller until after the third time he was as small as a rabbit.

“But I am too big,” said Barty.

“Shake yourself once, shake yourself twice, shake yourself three times,” said the Good Wolf, “and you will see what will happen.”

Once Barty shook himself, twice Barty shook himself, three times Barty shook himself, and he did see what happened. He was as small as a rabbit, and as he stood in the snow in his red coat and cap



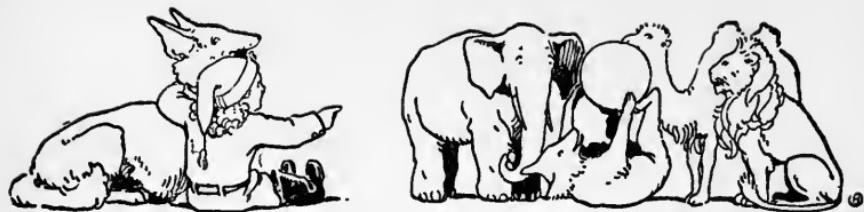


and his tiny rubber boots, he was too pretty for anything.

“Now for the Snow Feast,” the Good Wolf said. “Just follow me.”

Barty did follow him, and in a minute he found himself in a place like a wonderful little town under the earth. There were hundreds of long narrow passages like corridors, which crossed each other and ran this way and that, and seemed to have no end at all. The walls and roofs were smooth and brown, and were lighted by thousands and thousands of glow-worms that had fastened themselves





in beautiful festoons and patterns overhead and along the sides of the corridors. It was like the most lovely illumination.

“Every glow-worm in the forest comes to the Snow Feast,” the Good Wolf explained. “They can’t dance but they like to look on. That is their way of enjoying themselves. They polish their lamps up for months before the Feast time.”

They were so beautiful to look at that Barty could not have taken his eyes from them if the Good Wolf had not been in such a hurry. “We must not stop here,” he said. “We mustn’t really. We must





get to the Hall of the Snow Feast. Trot along—trot along—trot along.”

So they trotted and trotted round corners into other passages, and round other corners into other passages, in and out and farther and farther in the most wonderful and amusing way. The festoons and garlands of glow-worms lighted everything brilliantly, and presently they began to see all sorts of interesting little animals trotting along too as if they were all going to the same place. The delightful thing was that no animal was bigger than a small rabbit and there seemed to be

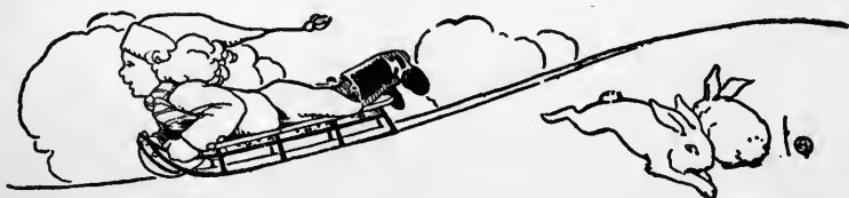




every kind of animal Party had ever heard of in his life or had ever seen pictures of. There were little elephants and little rhinoceroses, and little lions and tigers and leopards and giraffes, and wolves and foxes and bears, and tiny horses and sheep and cows, and they were all trotting along as if they were as happy as possible.

“Oh!” Barty cried out. “It looks as if a Noah’s Ark had come alive. Look at that tiny elephant trotting by the lion! Why don’t they fight?”

“Nothing fights at the Snow Feast.





Every one is quite tame. Lions and lambs talk things over, and cats and robins are intimate friends. Trot along—trot along."

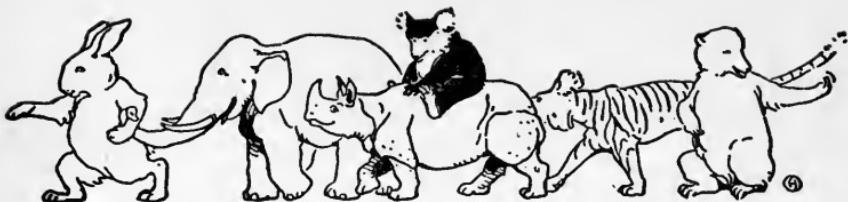
Barty trotted along, but he could not help asking questions. He was so happy and excited.

"How did they make themselves so little?" he said. "Did they shake themselves before they came down into the burrow?"

"Yes."

Barty looked at the elephant, and remembering how monstrously big ele-



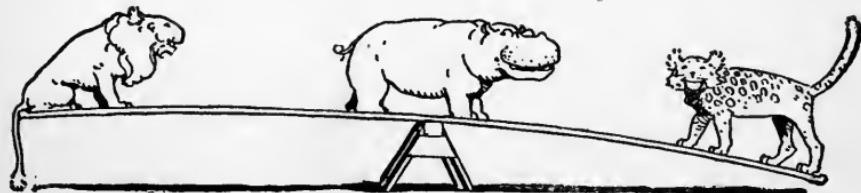


phants are when you see them at a circus, he could not help laughing aloud.

“Once he shook himself, twice he shook himself, three times he shook himself, and then he grew as little as that,” he said. “Oh! I wish I could take him home to play with.”

“We will see what we can do about that,” the Good Wolf said, just as if anything nice in the world might happen if you once came to a Snow Feast.

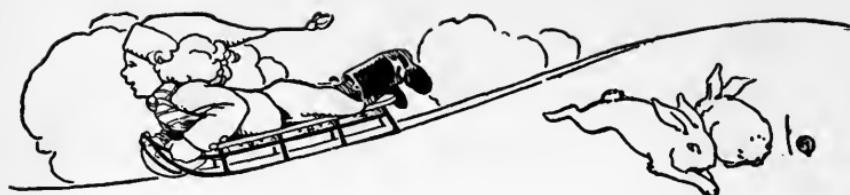
At the moment he said that, they turned another corner and there they were in a very much bigger passage, which ended





in an archway toward which all the little animals were making their way. This archway was the entrance to a great Hall which was so big that you could not see the end of it. It was lighted by myriads and myriads of glow-worm lamps, and beautifully decorated with sea shells and flowers made of snow and icicle jewels, and there was music being played somewhere, and in one part there were tables loaded with every kind of delightful thing to feast on. It was the most beautiful place that Barty had ever beheld, and he really could not help jumping a little





for joy when he got inside. A little lion who had just trotted in saw him and laughed.

“I feel like that too!” he said, and he gave two or three funny little jumps himself.

“I didn’t know you could talk,” said Barty.

“We can all talk at the Snow Feast,” said the little lion. “That’s the fun of it.”

“May I pat you?” Barty asked.

“Yes,” the little lion answered. “May I pat you?”





That made Barty laugh.

"You may if you like," he said, "but I did not know animals wanted to pat people."

"They don't," said the little lion, making a merry little skip. "I just said that for fun." And then Barty and he laughed like anything.

They were intimate friends from that minute, and the Good Wolf, who had to go to speak to some one on business, left them together. Then, I can tell you, fun began. The little lion brought another little lion to Barty, and then he brought





two fat little roly-poly bears who were twin brothers; and then he brought a tiny elephant, and a baby hippopotamus, and three beautiful kitten leopards, and the most lovely little snow-white horse with a long mane and a tail almost sweeping the ground.

Barty could scarcely believe his eyes. When the little elephant tossed up his trunk and trumpeted for him he almost shouted.

“It seems as if you couldn’t be real,” he said.

“We are real,” said the small elephant.





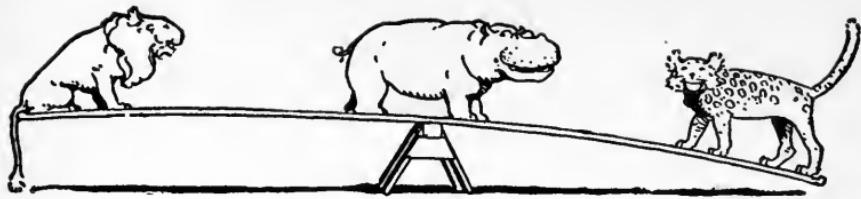
‘But we are only like this once a year
and no other boy has ever seen us.’

And suddenly, just as he spoke, they heard a tramping and tramping and the sound of music grew louder and louder as if it were coming nearer, and the little elephant threw up his trunk and trumpeted very loud as if he were saluting royalty.

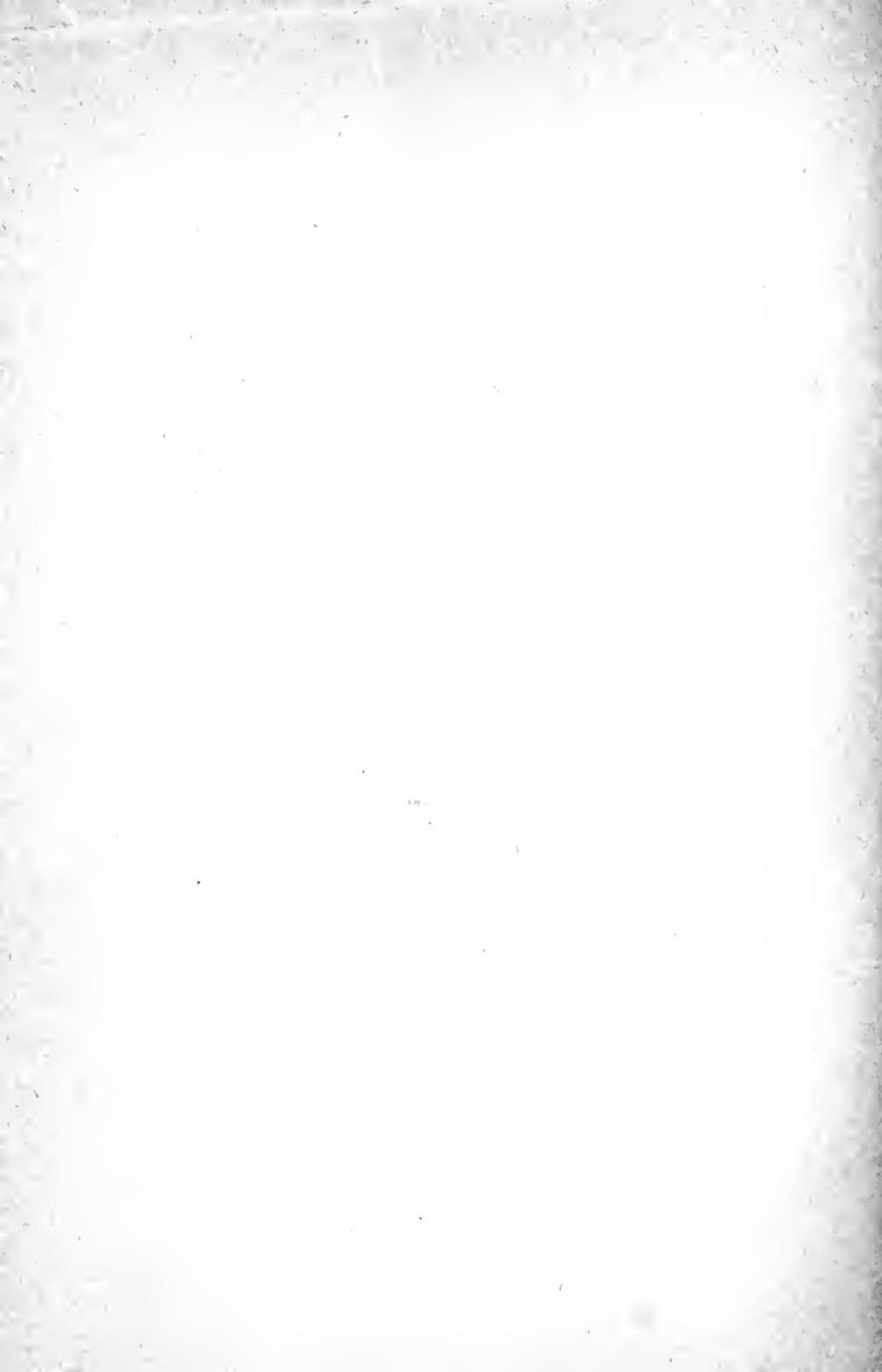
“What is it? What is it?” cried Barty.
“Who’s coming? Who’s coming?”

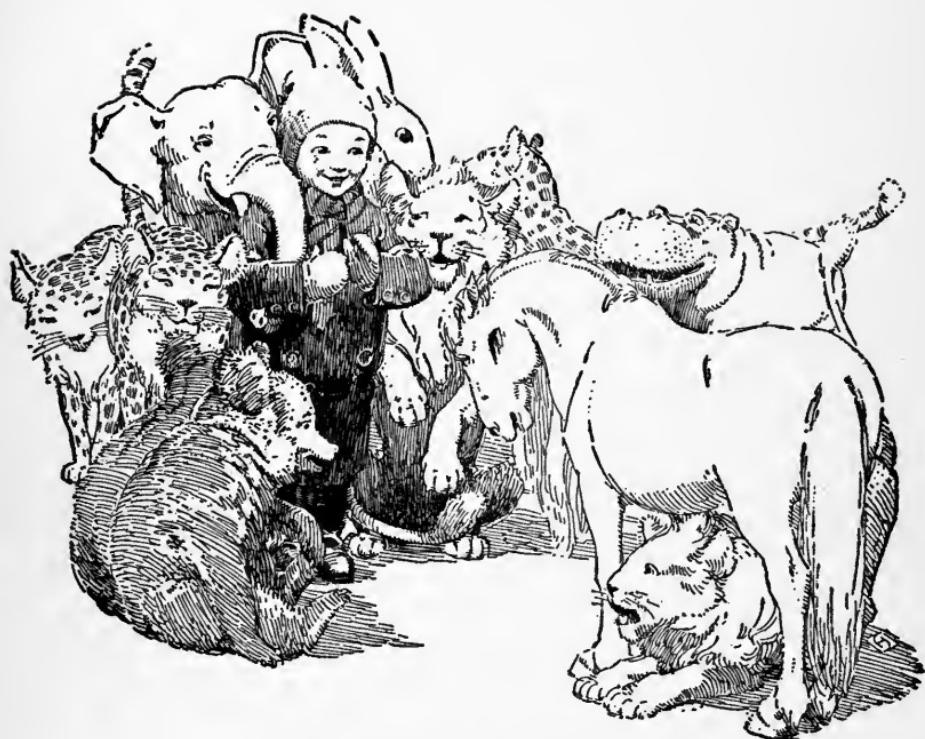
He said it to the Good Wolf, who at that minute came running back in a great hurry, pushing his way through the crowd.



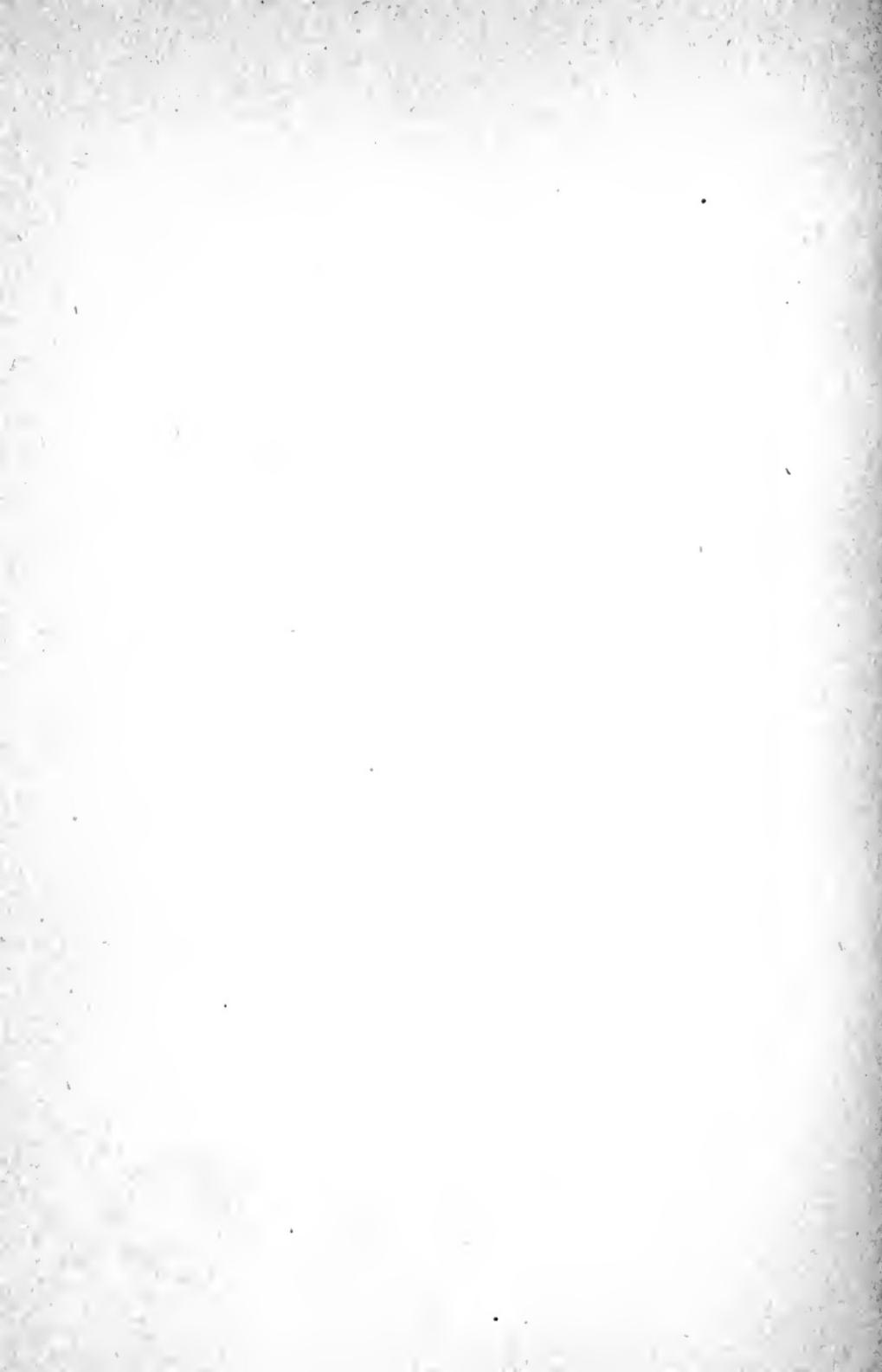


“Get into line!” he said. “Get into line! They are entering the hall—their Royal Highnesses, the Noah’s Ark Rabbits!”





CHAPTER THREE



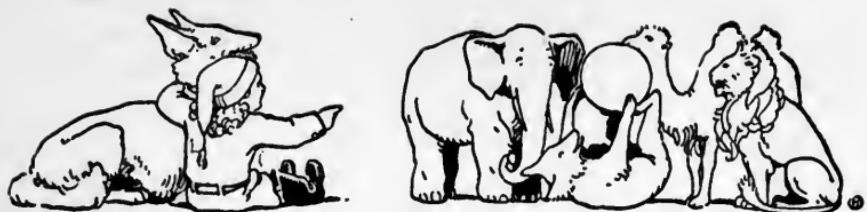


CHAPTER THREE



ARTY'S eyes grew round and big with excitement. A wonderful procession was entering the hall. First came a band of tiny jet black monkeys playing on golden trumpets—the Drum Major walking backward before them and twirling his staff; then came two black and two white rabbits, and they were carrying a throne on which sat two





old, old, old, white rabbits. They were so old that their hair had grown long enough to hang down below their feet, and their eyes were large and strange and had an ancient, solemn look in them, as if they had been gazing at the rabbit world for thousands of years. Barty thought their large, strange eyes looked nice, and he said so to the Good Wolf.

“They look kind,” he whispered.

“They were the two rabbits who went into the Ark with Noah,” the Good Wolf whispered back. “And they have lived so long and grown so wise that they have





found out that the best thing in the world is to be kind. They never find fault with any one. They know too much."

"But I thought they died long ago," said Barty.

"Everybody thought so," answered his friend. "But they didn't. They are the great, great, great, great, great, great grandfather and grandmother of all the rabbits in the world."

"How int'resting," said Barty, jumping up and down a little. "How 'normously int'resting!"

The procession behind them was made

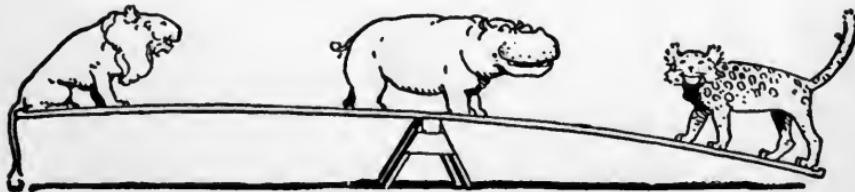




up of their courtiers, and they were all either black or white rabbits—a black one and a white one—a black one and a white one. They all wore gold collars and gold stars on their breasts. These were the Order of the Ancient Rabbit.

The black monkey musicians took their places on a little band stand, and as soon as the bearers of the throne set it down at the end of the hall, a grand blast of golden trumpets was heard, and every one of the animals made a profound bow.

Then the gentleman Noah's Ark Rabbit waved his long-haired front foot gracefully.



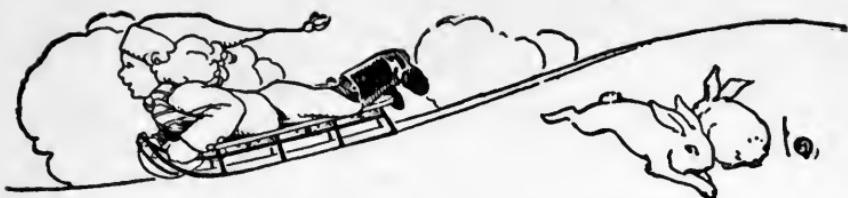


“Greeting, brothers and sisters,” he said. “Welcome to the Snow Feast. What is first to be done?”

The Good Wolf whispered to a very grand Court Rabbit who was standing near. He carried a wand and was black all over, except for a white place on his breast, which made him look as if he were in evening dress, and gave him a very fashionable air. The Court Rabbit waved his wand.

“Your Majesty, I have a new guest to present to you,” he said, and he made a sign to Barty.





"Walk forward and make a bow," the Good Wolf said. "You are going to be introduced."

Barty did as he was told, and made a very nice bow indeed. His Majesty, the Noah's Ark Rabbit, pointed to him with a benevolent, puzzled look.

"What kind of little animal is that?" he inquired. "I seem to remember seeing some like him when I was in the Ark, but I cannot remember what they were called."

The Good Wolf answered him.

"He is a boy, your Majesty," he said. "There are a good many of them on the





top." (He meant on the top of the earth, outside rabbit burrows.)

"Turn round, Boy," said the Noah's Ark Rabbit, "and let me look at you." And when Barty very politely turned round and round, his Majesty scratched himself behind his long ear and repeated, "Boy-Boy-Boy?" as if he were trying to remember something, and at last he turned to his wife and said, "My dear, do you remember anything about a Boy?"

The Queen Noah's Ark Rabbit had an ivory cane which she leaned on when she walked, and she lifted it and began to poke



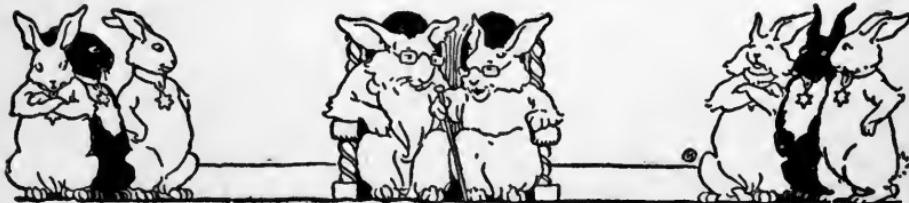


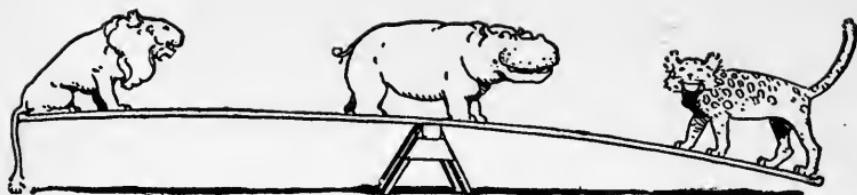
Barty gently all over, as if she were trying to find out what he was made of. She was a kind looking old thing, and suddenly she began to smile.

“Of course I remember,” she said, “and so will you if you think a moment. Who saved us from the Flood by taking us into the Ark? He would take us. And he cried like anything when his grandfather chose another pair. Who was it?”

His Majesty slapped his knee and rocked with laughter.

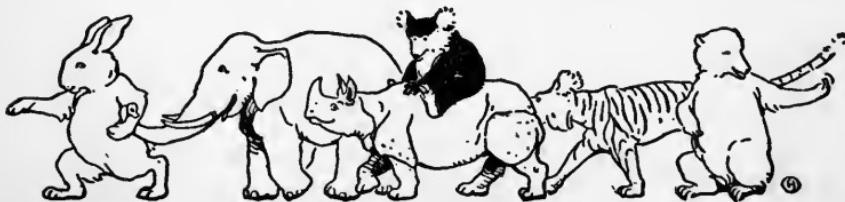
“It was a Boy!” he said. “It was a Boy as sure as I am a Noah’s Ark Rabbit.”





“It was a little Boy of Shem’s, and he had made pets of us,” said her Majesty. “He kept us in a hutch, and when the animals were picked out in pairs he huddled us in his arms and ran to his grandfather, and said, ‘Grandfather, you must take these—you must. If they are left behind I shall stay with them and let the Flood drown me!’ And though his grandfather had picked out a much bigger pair, he was obliged to take us or let the Boy be drowned.”

His Majesty slapped his knee again. “And that is why we are here to-day!”





he exclaimed. "How did we forget about Boys!"

"It was because the Flood frightened us so much, that as soon as we were let out of the Ark we ran away as fast as we could, and burrowed deep into the earth, and we never have been on top since, so we never have seen any until this minute. Dear! Dear! Dear!" said her Majesty. "Deary, deary me!"

Barty quite blushed with pleasure. They were such nice, old, long-haired, aged, aged benevolent things.

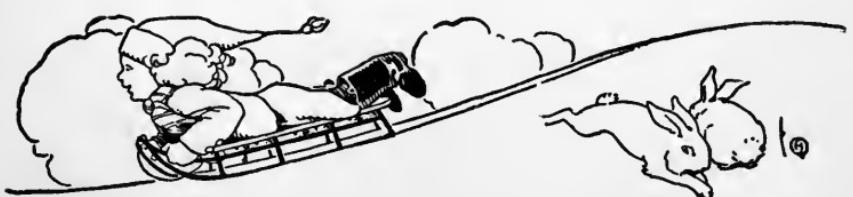
"I am very glad that I am a boy,"





he said, "if it was a boy who saved you."

"He is the nicest little animal I ever saw," said his Majesty enthusiastically. "I am perfectly delighted to see him. He must be led to the feasting table and given everything he likes to eat. He must enjoy himself. He must stuff his pockets full of good things to carry home. What can I give you for a Christmas present, Boy? Is there anything in all the wide world I can do for you? Goodness gracious, mercy me! You are the preserver of all our race. You are a Boy!"

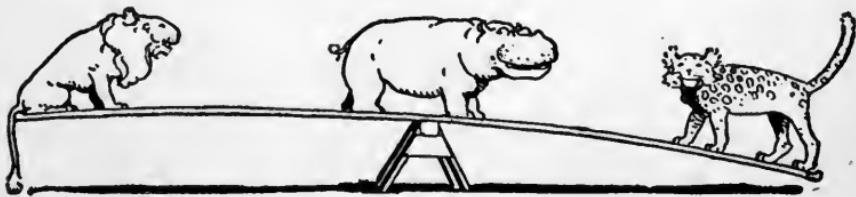


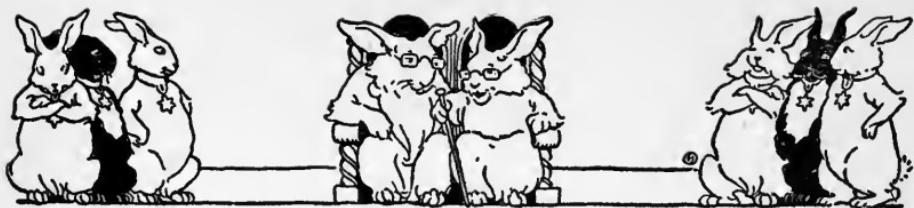


He was so delighted that he spoke as fast as lightning, and his words tumbled one over the other; seeing which, the Good Wolf spoke again.

“Your Majesty, he is not only a boy,” he said, “but he is a blessing and a privilege, which all boys are not.”

“Then he ought to have a Christmas present. He ought to have a hundred thousand million Christmas presents,” said the Noah’s Ark Rabbit, looking round, and growing so excited that all his long, white fur fluffed up and stood out all over him. “Are there any about here—are





there any about? Goodness gracious, mercy me! There ought to be Christmas presents on every side.”

Her dear old Majesty, his wife, began to look about her too, waving her fore-paws in her inexpressible agitation. (Inexpressible agitation means that she was so excited that she did not know what to say.) “I don’t see any! I don’t see any! I don’t see any!” she exclaimed. “Oh my! Oh my! Oh my! Oh my!”

“Never since I came out of the Ark,” said his Majesty, “have I known such a dreadful situation. A Boy—a Boy like





this, and no presents! The place ought to be strewn with them—it ought to be piled up with them—it ought to be stuffed—and crammed and bulging with them!"

(I wish you knew how Tim used to chuckle when this part was told.)

Then the Good Wolf spoke aloud with a most agreeable smile, and unless you have seen a Good Wolf you can never know how agreeable his smile can be.

"I know what he would like, your Majesty," he said.

"Do you! Do you?" said the Noah's



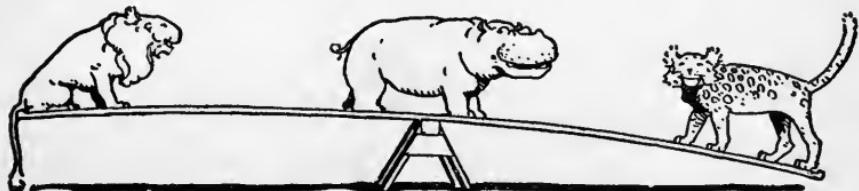


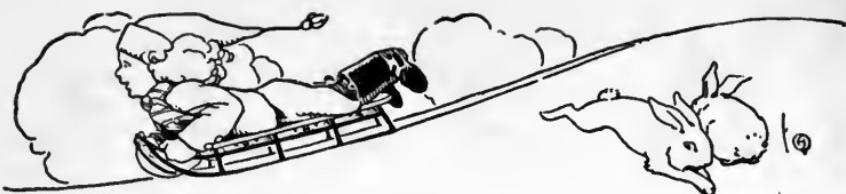
Ark Rabbit, his fur fluffing up and standing out still more because he was so interested. "Then speak up—speak up—speak up! Don't hang back, for goodness mercy's sake!"

"What he would like most of all would be that your Majesty should allow some of your subjects to be his friends and play with him," answered the Good Wolf.

"Would he—would he really?" said the Noah's Ark Rabbit. "Why, that seems a trifle."

"Oh!" cried Barty, "if they only might, if they only would. I should never want





any toys again as long as I lived!" and he clasped his hands.

"Well, I can do that for you in the shake of a rabbit's tail," said his Majesty. "How many would you like?"

"Enough," answered Barty, rather timidly, because he was so afraid he might be asking too much, "enough to play circus, so that I could be the ring-master. I've so often wanted to be a ring-master, and once I dreamed I was one."

The Noah's Ark Rabbit put his hand into a pocket under his long white fur, and he drew out a tiny whip.





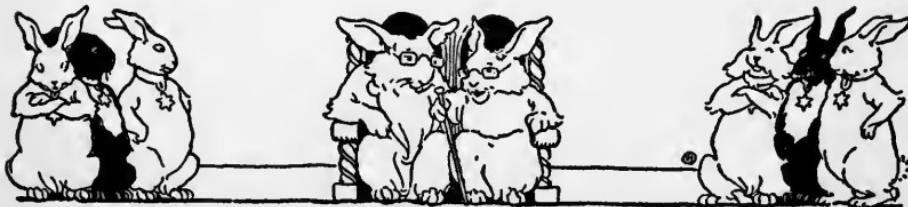
“Take that and crack it as loud as ever you can, and see what will happen,” he commanded.

Barty took it and swung it as he had seen ring-masters do, and he made it crack beautifully. What happened was that all the little animals, every one of them, turned their heads to look at him.

“Crack it again,” said the Noah’s Ark Rabbit.

When Barty cracked it again the little animals began to crowd into a circle all round him.

“Now, my dear,” said the Queen Noah’s





Ark Rabbit, "you just walk out and choose the ones you would like best, and ask them if they will come and play with you when they hear your whip crack."

"I think I must be in a dream now," said Barty, as he began to go round the circle.

"Will you be my friend and come and play with me?" he said to the little lion, and the little lion frisked and said: "Yes! Yes! Yes!"

And then he went to some little horses and to some more little lions, and to four elephants and a rhinoceros and a hippopotamus, and a little tiger and two tiny





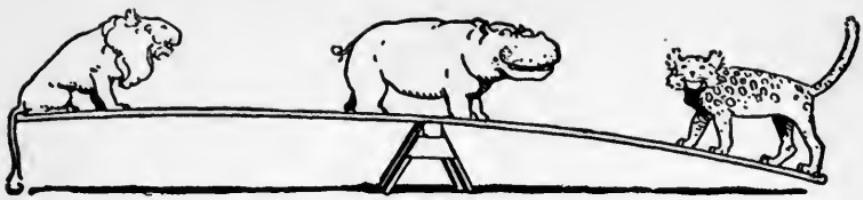
polar bears, and they all cried out: "Yes! Yes!" until at last he had enough animals to make a most splendid circus. There was so much shouting of "Yes! Yes! Yes!" that he began to rub his eyes.

"Are you sure I am not dreaming?" he asked the Good Wolf.

"Take him to the feasting tables," said the Noah's Ark Rabbit, "and fill him to the brim. He will know then that he is not dreaming."

Barty's eyes sparkled, because by this time he was very hungry, and when the Good Wolf led him into another illumi-





nated hall where all the nice things to eat that are in the world seemed spread before him on tables, you can imagine what he did. He ate just as much as a little boy could eat after getting up early on a frosty morning and forgetting all about his breakfast. But at last a sweet smile spread over his rosy face, and he drew a long, long breath and said:

“My belt is very tight by now. Thank you ever so much, Good Wolf. I never saw anything as beautiful as the Snow Feast is, and I should like to stay until it is quite over; but if I do not go home my



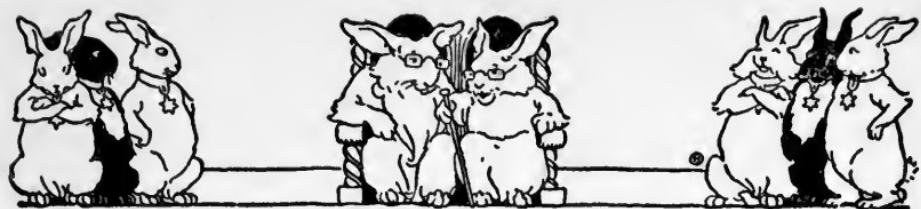


mother will be frightened. Do you think there is time for me to play a little with my circus before I go?"

"Yes, there is," the Good Wolf answered. "I'll look after the time. Come along. I see four little elephants and three lions looking over here this minute, as if they wanted to talk to you."

All the games Barty played and all the things he did that day, it would take chapters and chapters to tell about. When the Good Wolf told him it was time to go, he was being ring-master, and he was laughing and shouting with glee. And all the



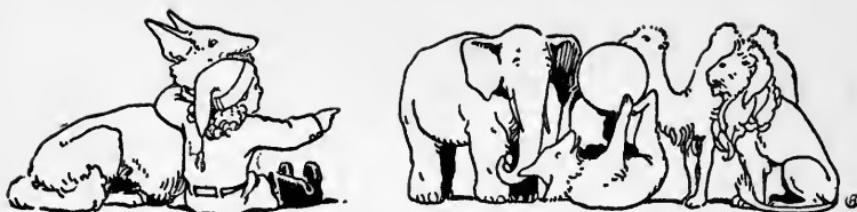


little animals were crowding round watching the elephants stand on their heads, and the horses read things written on blackboards. The Noah's Ark Rabbits themselves were perfectly delighted, and said they had never enjoyed a Snow Feast as much before.

“You must come next year,” they said, “and the next, and the next, and the next, and the next—” They were even going on murmuring “the next and the next,” when Barty went away.

“Now,” said the Good Wolf, “trot along—trot along—trot along.”





And they did trot along, down corridors and round corners, and through galleries, and in and out, and faster and faster, until at last they came to the hole they had crept in through; and they crept out through it, and found themselves once more standing in the sparkling snow with the circle of tall trees round them.

Barty clapped his hands.

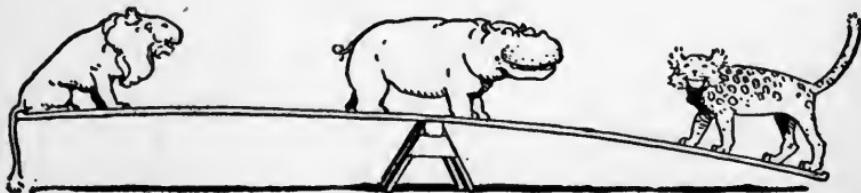
“I never had such a splendid time in my life,” he said. “I never had such beautiful things to eat. I never even dreamed of anything as nice as the Snow Feast.”





"Neither did I," answered the Good Wolf. "I have nothing like it even in the pink ear or the blue one. Now we must shake ourselves."

So they shook themselves once—they shook themselves twice—they shook themselves three times—and there they stood just the right size again. And the Good Wolf slipped into his harness, and Barty jumped on the red sled, and the bells jingled and jingled; and off they went, gliding over the sparkling snow, home through the deep forest where things built nests, and things burrowed under the earth, and





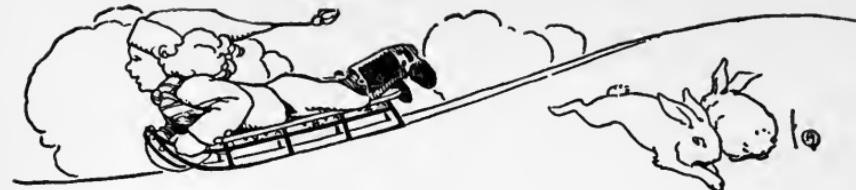
made long passages and little warm caves to hide in; and where there were wonderful Snow Feasts, which only one little boy in all the world had seen or heard of, and his name was Barty.





CHAPTER FOUR





CHAPTER FOUR



HEN the Good Wolf had drawn the red sled with Barty on it nearly to the edge of the deep forest, he stopped. "Now," he said, "you must get off and un-harness me."

Then Barty suddenly thought of something. "What shall I say when my mother asks me where I got my new sled?"

"Well," answered the Good Wolf, "I





think I shall have to be a kind of secret. Mothers are very easily frightened and I wouldn't frighten a mother for anything. You might tell her it is a present from an intimate friend, and if she asks what his name is you can say it is Mr. Wolf. Have you got your whip safe?"

Barty took it out of his pocket. Now that he was his real size again it looked very tiny.

"I would advise you to go into a quiet place in the forest when you crack that whip," said the Good Wolf. "If any one came when you were playing circus



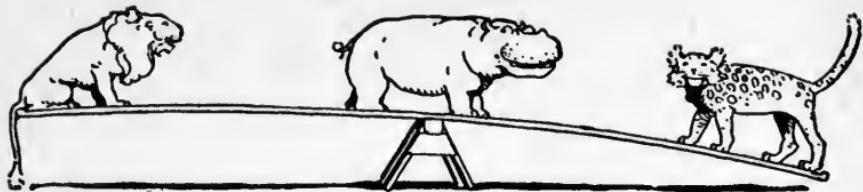


your little animals would suddenly grow big again and that would be very inconvenient."

"There is a very quiet place I know of," answered Barty. "It is my secret playing place. You have to creep through bushes to get to it. It is round and has grass on it. It will make a beautiful circus. But when will you come back and see me?"

"I don't know yet, but I will come some time," answered the Good Wolf. "I am glad I happened to be at the edge of the forest this morning. There is some pleasure in taking a boy like you, who is





a blessing and a privilege, to a Snow Feast. Now I must go."

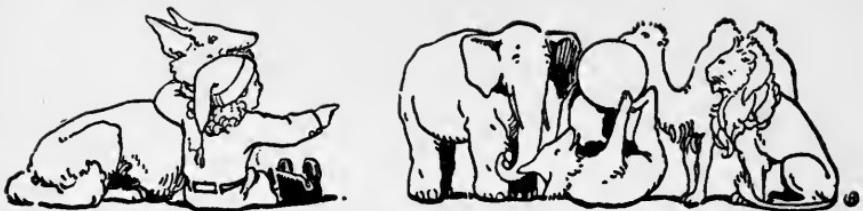
Once he shook himself, twice he shook himself, three times he shook himself, and he was a wolf again.

"Good-bye," he said, "until we meet again." And off he trotted.

Barty went back to his house dragging his red sled after him and thinking about things, until his cheeks were as red as his coat.

His mother was very busy making bread, but when she saw him she was so surprised that she stopped kneading her dough.





“Where did you get that splendid sled?” she asked.

“Some one in the forest gave it to me,” answered Barty. “He said he was my intimate friend and his name was Mr. Wolf. I think,” and Barty hesitated a little as he remembered, “I do think he was a kind of a fairy.”

His mother laughed. “I should think he was too, if he gave me such a nice present as that,” she said, and she went on with her kneading.

Barty played with his sled all the rest of the day, and at night he put it in a

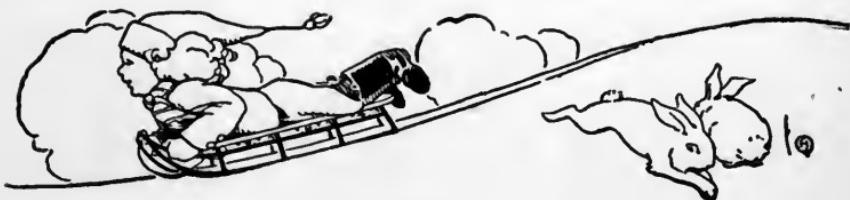




very safe corner in the woodshed. Before he went to sleep he hid the tiny whip under his pillow.

“But I do feel, now that I can’t see either of them,” he whispered to himself as he lay in the dark, “I do feel as if it must have been a dream. Was it?” And he had to put his hand under his pillow and touch the whip before he could go to sleep.

It was curious, but the first thing when he wakened in the morning he found himself sitting up in bed and rubbing his eyes and saying aloud to himself:



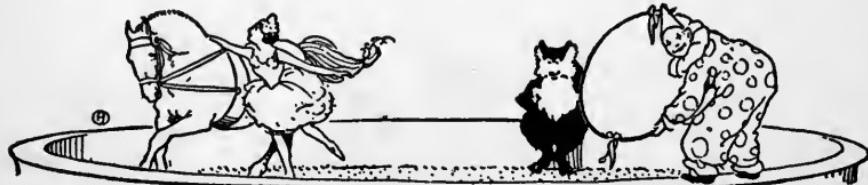


“Was it? Was it? Was it?”

Then he remembered the tiny whip and he darted his hand under his pillow, but he felt nothing. He lifted the pillow and looked under it, but he saw nothing. He jumped out of bed and shook the sheet and shook it, but he felt nothing. The tiny whip was gone.

He just stood and stared, and then he said rather slowly:

“Well, if it was a dream it was the nicest one I ever had and I’m glad I had it. Perhaps some night I shall have it





again.” And he dressed himself quickly and ran downstairs.

And this was the first thing his mother said to him as she came in from the wood-shed:

“I’ve just been looking at your new sled, Barty, and it is the nicest one I ever saw.”

“Oh!” Barty almost shouted, “is it in the woodshed? Is it?” And he flew out to look, and there it was! And it was just as red and just as jingling and just as beautiful as ever.

“The Good Wolf wasn’t a dream,”



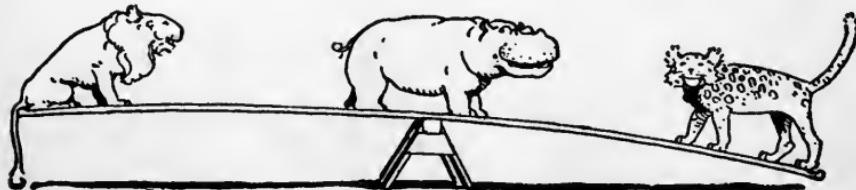


he cried joyfully. "And so the other wasn't."

But as the days went by and he wished more and more that he could find the little whip and make sure that the tiny lions and tigers and elephants had been real, he used to go and sit down very hard on the red sled and say out loud ever so many times:

"It wasn't a dream—it wasn't—it wasn't—it wasn't one!" and that would make him feel quite cheerful.

One quite beautiful morning, after the snow had gone away, he was in his bed-





room and he suddenly caught sight of something bright, shining under a wardrobe.

"I wonder what that is," he said, feeling his heart begin to beat. He crept to the wardrobe as if he thought the bright thing would get away if it heard him, and suddenly he dropped on his knees, thrust his arm far under the wardrobe, quite against the wall, and pulled out the bright thing—and it was the whip. The bright part was the gold handle. It had rolled out from under the pillow and had rested on the edge of the bed until it had been

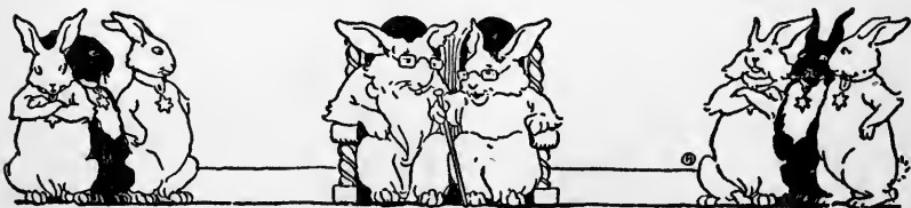




shaken off and rolled under the wardrobe and stayed there. Barty gave a shout.

“There,” he cried, “I said it wasn’t a dream—and it wasn’t one!”

He was so excited that he almost did a dangerous thing. He almost cracked the whip right in his bedroom, but he remembered just in time that if he did, and the little animals came and his mother came too, they would grow big all at once at sight of her, and it would be enough to frighten any mother to death—besides the room being so small that it wouldn’t hold even a single elephant.





"I'd better be careful," he said to himself, "I'm glad I thought of that in time."

When he got outside he really couldn't wait until he got into the deep forest, and was under the trees, flying along the path which led to the bushes which hid his secret place. It was a very secret place. You had to crawl through a sort of tunnel until you crawled through a hole into a clear green place with a close hedge of bushes round it, except where there was a high rock at the back—a great big rock with a cave in it. Barty had never been into the cave because it rather frightened



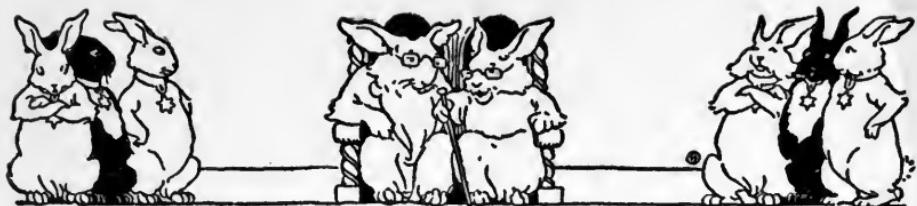


him. He thought it looked like a Robber's Cave, though he had never seen any robbers about, and anyway there was only a long narrow slit in the rock for any one to squeeze in and out of. A fat robber could never have got in. Barty crawled through the hole in the bushes and stood up on his feet, quite out of breath. His eyes were sparkling with joy.

“Now then,” he said when he had his breath again. “Now then!” And he stood in the middle of the green circle and cracked his whip.

It was such a little whip that it made





only a little crack. And at first nothing came.

“Shake yourself once—shake yourself twice—shake yourself three times,” he said. “Perhaps I had better crack it three times.” And three times he cracked it as loud as ever he could. After he had done it he stood quite still and listened.

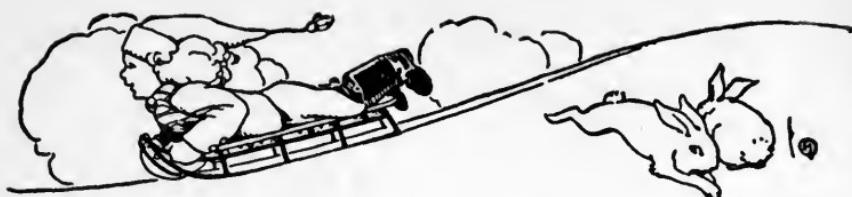
He listened and listened, and the deep forest seemed so still that he could hear himself breathe. He listened and listened again, and it seemed so still that he felt as if he could hear himself think. Then he listened again, and he heard a faint,





faint rustle. It sounded far away and he did not know where it came from. But presently he knew it was coming nearer. Yes, it was coming nearer and nearer and it seemed to be coming from the right side and from the left and from before and behind him, and it grew louder and louder until it sounded like scampering and like shuffling and like jumping and like little trotting hoofs. And in about three minutes two little lions jumped over the bushes and two little tigers followed them and two little leopards after them, and two little bears came shuffling through the hole





at the end of the tunnel, and two tiny hippopotamuses and two rhinoceroses, and two lovely elephants who marched into the middle of the ring and threw up their trunks and trumpeted; and last of all four splendid little horses, one snow white and one jet black and two with beautiful brown spots on them, leaped over the hedge and made a bow to Barty, bending their heads and scraping with their feet, and wheeled about and began to gallop round and round the ring as fast as ever they could, just as if they were at a real circus.

“Oh, I said it wasn’t a dream!” shouted



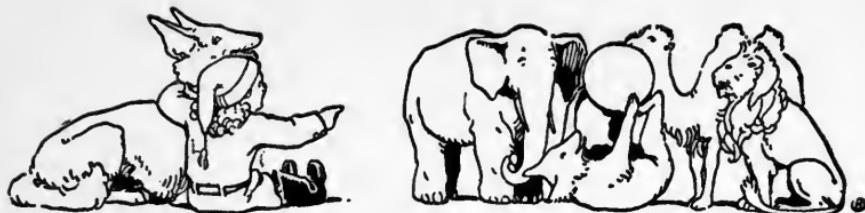


Barty. "And it isn't—it isn't—it isn't! Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!" And he jumped up and down and laughed for joy, and stamped and stamped and stamped. Then they all crowded round him as if they felt just as happy as he did.

"Didn't you want us before?" they said. "What a long time you were in calling us."

"I lost my whip," answered Barty, and when they all cried out "Oh-h-h!" he suddenly felt as if he must turn round and look behind, and when he did it he saw that the nicest thing in the world had happened. There sat the Good Wolf near





the bushes, smiling at him. He could not help running to him and hugging him.

“Oh, I am glad! I am glad!” he said.
“This is the nicest thing of all!”

“It is nice,” answered the Good Wolf.
“I was hunting in Russia and I wasn’t sure
I could come. But I must attend to this
whip business.”

He shook his blue ear and a narrow,
rather long ivory box fell out.

“That is a whip box,” he said, and he
began to scratch in the earth until he made
a rather deep hole under a bush. “Now,”
he said, “whenever you have done with





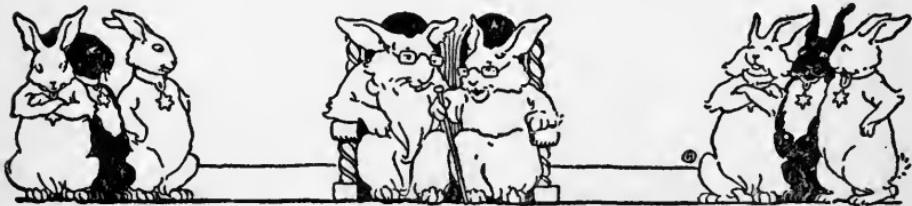
your whip you must lock it in that box and put it in this hole, and you will always know where to find it."

"I will never forget," said Barty.

The circus they had that morning was ten times as nice as the one they had had before.

"Oh, what fun it would be," said Barty, "if we had a little clown." He wasn't hinting in the least, he only said it because it just came into his head, and he had no sooner said it than the Good Wolf walked forward.

"Now I should like to know," he said,

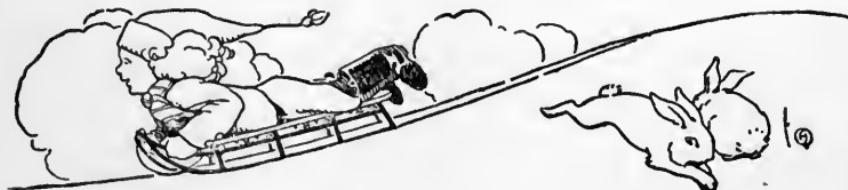




“why I never thought once of that. It was perfectly ridiculous of me.”

He gave his pink ear a flip and out flew a tiny clown in baggy white trousers with his hands stuck in the pockets, and a frill round his neck and a red and white painted face. And he turned sixteen somersaults one after the other and bounced onto his feet and stuck out his tongue, and said in a cracked little shrill voice just like a big clown: “Here we are again, sir. How are you to-morrow?”

And this was such a tremendous joke that it was not only Barty who laughed





till he rolled over, but every single little animal laughed till it rolled over, and the grass was just covered with little elephants and lions and tigers and bears and the rest, rolling about and holding their sides. There is no knowing when they would have stopped, but in the midst of it the Good Wolf shook his blue ear and out flew the prettiest little circus lady in the world. She had pink tights on and wore so many short gauzy spangled skirts that she looked like a fairy, and she whirled round and round on the very tips of her toes, and sprang onto the backs of two of the pret-

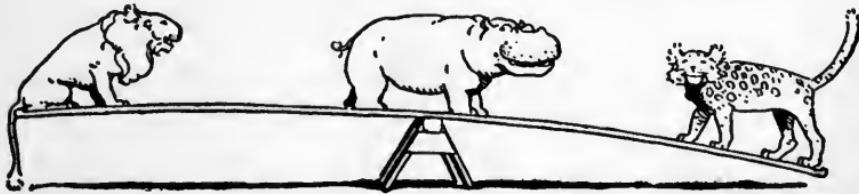


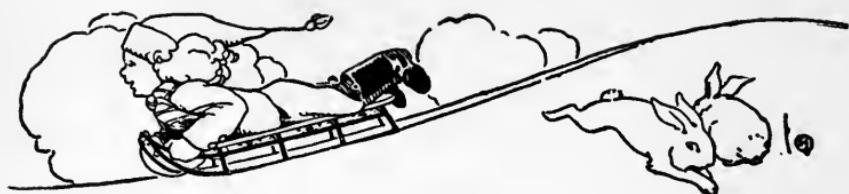


tiest horses—one foot on each back—and went galloping round the ring like lightning, smiling and kissing her hand to everybody.

That was why the circus was ten times nicer than it had been before. Everything was there. And Barty went on being ring-master and the circus grew more and more delightful and more and more exciting, until at last the whole entertainment was tired and had to sit down and rest and fan itself because it was actually hot.

They all sat in a circle, and because none of the animals were as big as kittens,



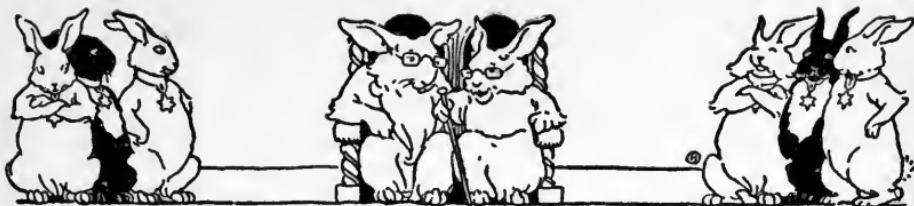


Barty looked like a very pretty giant with rosy cheeks and curly hair. The animals had grown so fond of him that they all sat and looked at him affectionately, and the nearest elephant and lion perfectly cuddled up against him. The beautiful little lady circus rider perched on his hand and the clown sat down on his shoe.

“I am very glad to have made your acquaintance,” the little lady said. “I admire you very much. You make a most delightful ringmaster.”

“We all like him,” said the biggest little lion. “And we all mean to stand by him.





I came to him from the Nubian desert this morning, and it is a long way off."

"I love every one of you," said Barty. "I don't believe there is any other boy in the world who has such delightful friends."

He stroked the lion's side, and he was just going to put his cheek against his mane, when he stopped suddenly and stared with wide open eyes at the long narrow opening in the big rock at the other side of the green circus. A thin, wicked face with evil shining black eyes was peering out and watching him and his animals.

He started so that he almost dropped

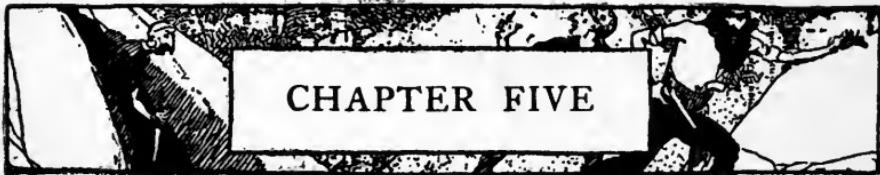




the little lion. And that minute he saw another thin wicked face, and another above that and another above that, all glaring at him. And the owner of the first wicked face began to wriggle his long body through the narrow slit, and in about two minutes he had wriggled his way out and stood grinning, with swords and pistols and knives hung at his belt.

“He is a thin robber!” gasped Barty. “I knew a fat one could never get in and out. It is a Robber’s Cave.”





CHAPTER FIVE



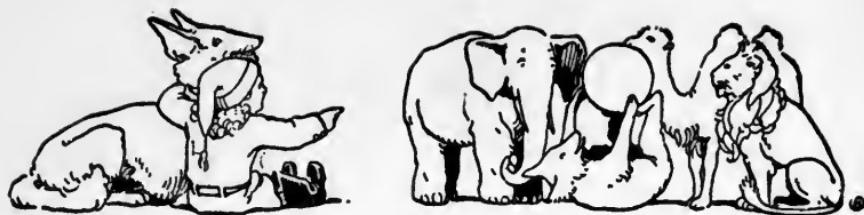


CHAPTER FIVE



O find that your secret playground has a robber's cave in it is very startling. Barty stood up quickly and so did all the little animals. At first Barty thought they might suddenly grow big, as the Good Wolf had said they would if they saw a grown-up person. But they did not. And if they had looked as small as kittens when they were compared with





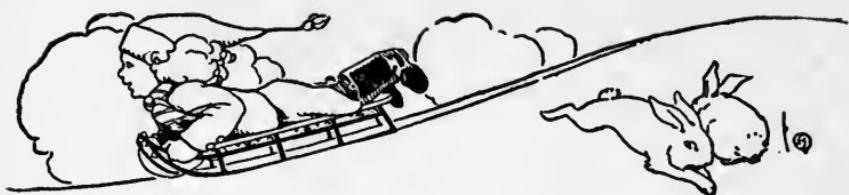
a boy, they looked almost as small as mice when they were compared with a long, thin robber. In fact, they looked so tiny that Barty was afraid they would be hurt.

“You had better run off into the forest as fast as you can before he wriggles all the way out,” he said quickly to the biggest little lion.

“No, we won’t,” the lion answered. “Not much. We are going to stop and see the fun.”

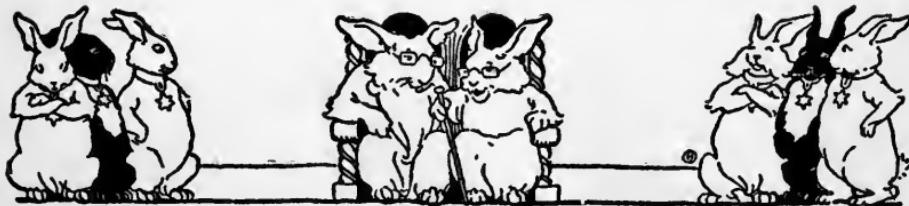
Barty was afraid there might not be much fun, but when he saw the lion





slowly wink one eye at him and then saw another lion wink, and a tiger and elephant wink too, until each animal in the circus had winked, he began to see that something queer was going to happen. But he could not imagine what it was going to be, because they all huddled round his feet as if they were frightened, and even shook and shivered.

When the first robber had wriggled through the slit in the rock, another one began to wriggle through, and then another and another until there were no less than four robbers standing scowling at him.





“Hello!” said the biggest one, who was the captain, and had a feather sticking in his hat and at least four pistols and six swords hanging at his belt. “Here’s a rich kid! He’s just what we were looking for. He’s got the finest lot of mechanical toys I ever saw in my life. Just look at those lions lashing their tails.”

That made Barty very angry. He felt as if his friends were being insulted, and he strode forward and stood before them.

“They are not toys!” he shouted out. “They are as real as you are! They are my intimate friends. Go away!”





The robbers burst out laughing.

“They are not toys!” they said. “Real lions and tigers and elephants half as big as kittens!”

“If they are real, make the lion roar,” said the robber captain, grinning.

“Oh do roar! Please roar!” said Barty to the lions. “Perhaps it will frighten them.”

The biggest little lion winked at him again quite as if he were having a joke, and he turned round and roared. But it was such a little roar that Barty could not help knowing that it sounded like a toy



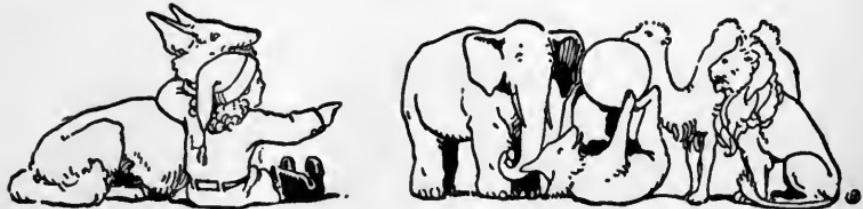


roar. And the robbers laughed louder than ever.

“Good Wolf! Good Wolf!” he called out, and turned to look for him. But there was no wolf there—only a big, white furry dog, who looked so innocent that he would frighten nobody.

The captain slapped his knee.

“Never since I was a robber have I seen such toys!” he cried. “We can sell them to a king for their weight in gold. These two are mine—and I will take the dog.” And he picked up a little lion in one hand and a little tiger in another.

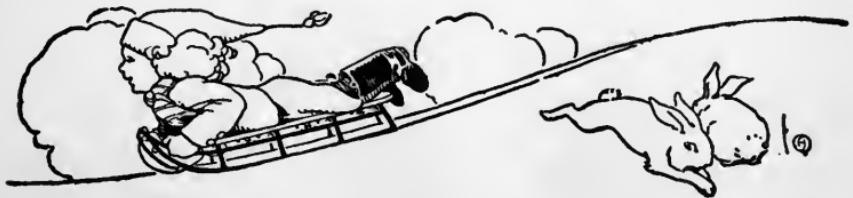


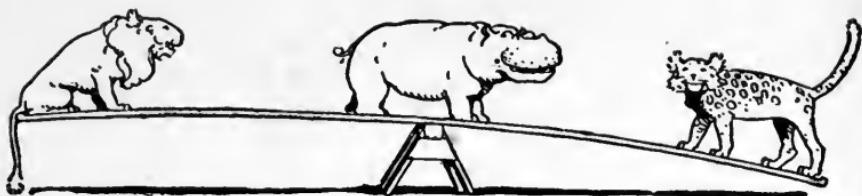


“You shall not touch them!” cried out Barty. “You shall not touch—” But he stopped in the middle of saying it because the something very queer was beginning to happen. It began that very minute.

The robber captain standing in the middle of the ring suddenly turned pale. He looked so frightened that the other robbers did not pick up anything, and stood and stared at him with their mouths open.

“What’s the matter?” he shouted out. “They are growing heavier. I can’t hold them. They are swelling! They are





swelling!" and he dropped both the lion and the tiger on the grass.

And Barty saw that they were swelling. First they swelled until they were as big as cats, then they swelled until they were as big as dogs, then they were as big as pigs, then they were as big as calves, and the next second they were as big as the hugest lion and tiger in a menagerie, and the other lions, and tigers, and leopards were as big as they were. The elephants and rhinoceroses and hippopotamuses had to go outside the hedge to swell because there wasn't room inside. But they put

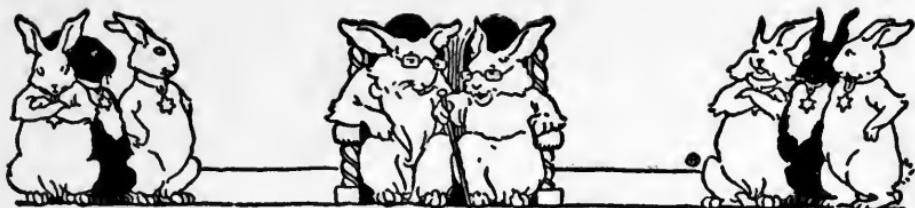




their big heads through the bushes so that there was no mistake about their being there.

You can just imagine how frightening it was to the robbers to find themselves suddenly surrounded by roaring lions, and tigers, and leopards, and huge trampling elephants and hippopotamuses instead of tiny toy creatures they thought they could pick up and carry away. If Barty had not known that all of them were his particular friends he would have been frightened too. The robbers stood in the midst of them all and howled with fright.





“Call them off! Call them off!” they shouted to Barty because they saw he was really the ring-master, “we will never do it again! Never—never—never—never-r-r !”

The captain tried to dart to the crack in the rock and wriggle through, but the biggest lion put out a huge paw and dragged him back by the seat of his trousers. He laid him flat on the grass and put the huge paw on him and roared and roared.

“I wouldn’t kill him,” cried Barty.
“Perhaps he is sorry.”

“We are all sorry,” the robbers sobbed.





“We are sorrier than we ever were before in our lives!”

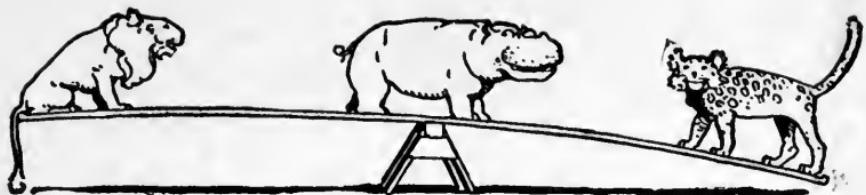
“I’ll see that they are sorry enough,” said the biggest lion, but of course it was only Barty who understood what he said. The robbers thought he was roaring and their knees knocked together.

“What are you going to do to them?” asked Barty.

“Watch!” answered the lion.

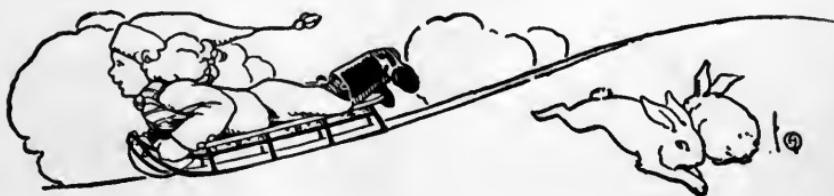
He made a sign to his mate and two tigers, and each of them took up a robber by his trousers and shook him as if he





were a rat. Their legs flew and their arms flew until they looked as if they would fly to pieces, and they had not even the strength to yell with. Of course it must have been most disagreeable and breath-taking, but it served them perfectly right, for if you are a robber I should like to know what you expect.

When the shaking was over, and the lions and tigers laid the robbers on the ground again, they did look queer. You see the bones had nearly been shaken out of their bodies and the teeth out of their mouths, and the hair had been shaken off





their heads, every bit of it, and they were quite bald.

“Now,” said the biggest lion to Barty, “you can tell them we are going to give them a nice bit of a run through the forest; and if they can get away from us this time they may as well give one hour a day in the future to remembering that if they come near this cave any more they won’t get away again. They might do their remembering from five to six every morning.”

So Barty told them, but when he had explained they were more frightened than ever.

“We never can get away from them,”



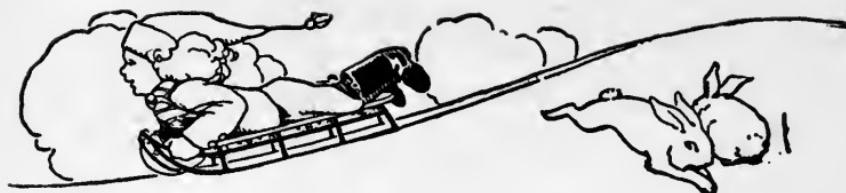


the robber captain said, wiping his eyes on his sleeve. "We are too nervous to run, and our knees keep knocking together. Ask him if he won't let us off easier than that. There's not one of us who would think of coming back here. Never—never—never!"

He was in such a state that Barty actually began to feel sorry for him. He turned and spoke to the lion.

"How would it do," he inquired, "if they stopped being robbers and were something nicer instead—bakers or hair-dressers or pew openers?"





“We will! We will! We will!” shouted out the robbers.

“I never wanted to be a robber,” sobbed the captain. “I always wanted to be a toy-shop man. I’m fond of toys.”

“And I wanted to be a confectioner,” said another robber.

“And I wanted to learn to play the harp!” cried another.

“And it nearly broke my heart,” said the fourth, “because I wasn’t allowed to be a gardener, and grow violets and sweet peas.”



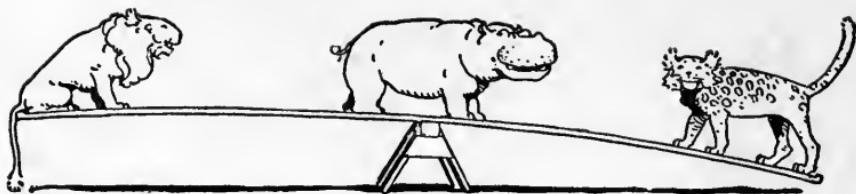


"Well," said the lion to Barty, "tell them to go away and be anything they like that is decent."

"Wait a minute," said the Good Wolf, stepping forward. "Ask them if they haven't had a great many adventures."

"Yes, thousands of them," the captain answered when Barty asked him. "We've been so many things; we've been pirates and gold-diggers, and we've sailed the Spanish Main and things like that. We could tell stories for years if you'd like to hear them, and if your friends would not mind if we came back here occasionally—





in our best clothes—after we've quite stopped being robbers."

"O, let them—let them!" Barty cried out joyfully.

"That was what I was thinking of," said the Good Wolf. "There is nothing more entertaining than a tame pirate or robber."

"Tell them," said the lion, "that they may come back twice a week. They shall be called 'The Combined Robbers and Pirates Story-telling Club.' And we shall be here to listen—and see that they behave themselves."





So it was agreed that the robbers should be allowed to go away and begin working as hard as possible at not being robbers. And they were so relieved that they were going to slip off as quietly as they could, touching their hats meekly to everybody, but Barty could not help shaking hands with the captain just to encourage him a little.

“I was frightened at first,” he said, “but it has all turned out to be so nice that I am very glad you came.”

When they were gone he sat down and fanned himself with his hat, and the great

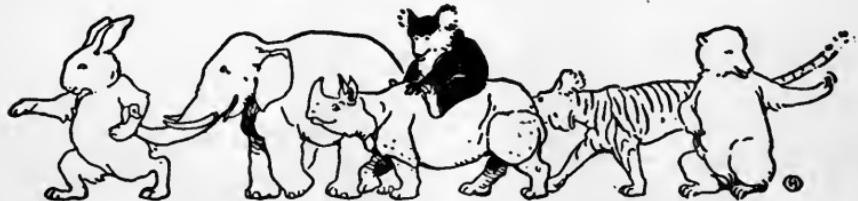




big lions and tigers standing round him made him look very little indeed.

“Could you get small again, please?” he said. “I’m not a bit frightened, but you are rather too big for my size.”

Every one of them began to un-swell that moment, and they got smaller and smaller, and smaller and smaller, until they were just the right size again—Snow Feast size—and they sat down in a ring around Barty; and the circus lady crept out from under a leaf and sat on his shoulder, and the clown crawled out of the bushes and sat down on his foot again—but





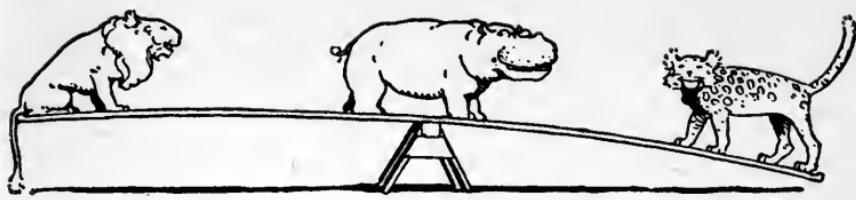
not before he had turned twenty somersaults.

“Well,” chuckled Barty, fanning away, “you did stand by me, didn’t you? And it has been a ’normous adventure. I shall so like to lie awake and think of it. I know now why you all winked at me, and said you were going to stay to see the fun.”

And they all laughed like anything—the Good Wolf more than all the rest.

In fact, they laughed and laughed and laughed until they could scarcely stop themselves, and when at last it was time





for Barty to go home, and he said good-by to them, and the little elephants threw up their trunks and trumpeted for him as if he were a king going back to his palace, he ran down the path in the wood chuckling to himself nearly all the way.

“Oh!” he said, “what wonderful things happen in the deep forest where things sing and things build nests and burrow in the earth, and make little warm caves to live in.”

THE END

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